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SUBJECT: SLOVAKIA POLITICAL ROUNDUP JANUARY 1-10, 2004

POLICE PRESIDIUUM REORGANIZED

1. (U) JANUARY 1 MARKED THE BEGINNING OF THE REORGANIZATION OF THE SLOVAK POLICE PRESIDIUUM. THE OFFICE FOR THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST CORRUPTION UNDER JOZEF SATEK, FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT FOR THE INVESTIGATION OF PARTICULARLY SERIOUS CRIME, WILL INVESTIGATE ALLEGATIONS OF CORRUPTION AND ECONOMIC AND PROPERTY-RELATED CRIMES INVOLVING DAMAGES MORE THAN SKK 60.8 MILLION (\$1,924,051). THE OFFICE FOR THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST ORGANIZED CRIME, HEADED BY POLICE VICE PRESIDENT JAROSLAV SPISIK, WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR COMBATING CRIMINAL AND TERRORIST GROUPS AND INCLUDES THE FORMER FINANCIAL POLICE OFFICE, NATIONAL ANTI-DRUG UNIT, ANTI-TRAFFICKING UNIT AND OFFICE FOR ORGANIZED CRIME. OTHER EFFECTS OF THE REORGANIZATION INCLUDE CONSOLIDATION OF REGIONAL POLICE UNITS, INCREASING PATROL OFFICERS FROM 4,303 TO 5,177, AND MERGING INVESTIGATORS AND CRIMINAL POLICE TO INCREASE EFFICIENCY.

IVAN SIMKO'S "PLATFORM" NOW A PARTY

2. (U) IVAN SIMKO, FORMER SDKU MEMBER AND OUSTED MINISTER OF DEFENSE, HAS REGISTERED HIS FREE FORUM PLATFORM AS A POLITICAL PARTY WITH A PETITION INCLUDING 1,600 SIGNATURES. UPON FORMING THE PLATFORM LAST NOVEMBER, SIMKO INDICATED THAT IT WOULD BE A FORUM FOR DISCUSSION ABOUT REFORM WITHIN SDKU. AS TIME HAS GONE ON, HOWEVER, IT APPEARS SIMKO DECIDED COMPROMISE WITH PM DZURINDA WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE. KDH, SMK AND ANO LEADERS INDICATE AN AGREEMENT WITH FF WILL BE IMPORTANT TO ENSURE A MAJORITY IN PARLIAMENT FOR THE COALITION. LEADERS OF ALL FOUR COALITION PARTIES ARE SET TO MEET WITH SIMKO ON JANUARY 14, ALTHOUGH DZURINDA WOULD NOT MEET PRIVATELY WITH SIMKO. THE NEW PARTY WILL ALSO SEEK A PART OF THE GOVERNMENT FINANCING GIVEN TO SDKU AND ANO, PARTIES FROM WHICH ITS MEMBERS COME.

SCHUSTER SCOLDS PARTIES IN NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS

3. (U) IN HIS NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS, PRESIDENT SCHUSTER NOTED THAT THIS YEAR WILL HAVE A SOMEWHAT BITTER TASTE, WITH HIGHER PRICES FOR ENERGY, THE NEW FLAT 19-PERCENT VAT AND PENSION REFORM. HE SAID POLITICAL PARTIES SEEM TO HAVE TOO MUCH INFLUENCE IN SOCIETY, WHICH TENDS TO LIMIT CIVIC ACTIVITIES, SO THE WAY PEOPLE VOTE IN THE NEXT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION WILL DETERMINE WHETHER THIS TREND CONTINUES OR CAN BE COUNTERBALANCED BY AN INDEPENDENT PRESIDENT.

NATIONALIST-ORIENTED PARTIES SIGN ACCORD

4. (U) AFTER NUMEROUS ANNOUNCEMENTS OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS INDICATING THEY WERE CLOSER AND CLOSER TO AGREEMENT, FIVE PARTIES SIGNED A COOPERATION ACCORD. THEY INCLUDE THE SLOVAK NATIONAL PARTY (SNS), CHAIRED BY JAN SLOTA; THE HZDS BREAKAWAY PARTIES PEOPLE'S UNION (LU) AND MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRACY (HZD), CHAIRED BY VOJTECH TKAC AND IVAN GASPAROVIC, RESPECTIVELY; STANISLAV PANIS' NATIONAL UNITY PARTY AND ANDREJ TRNOVEC' PEOPLE PARTY.

PRESIDENT GETS MISSILE FOR BIRTHDAY

5. (U) PRESIDENT RUDOLF SCHUSTER CELEBRATED HIS BIRTHDAY WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS IN EASTERN SLOVAKIA. UKRAINIAN PRESIDENT LEONID KUCHMA SENT AN SS-24 SCALPEL INTERCONTINENTAL BALLISTIC MISSILE ON THE OCCASION. IT WILL BECOME PART OF AN EXHIBIT AT THE AVIATION MUSEUM IN KOSICE.

COST OF RENT MAY FORCE WARHOL MUSEUM TO MOVE

6. (U) THE ANDY WARHOL MUSEUM IN MEDZILABORCE REPORTEDLY WILL MOVE TO A NEW LOCATION DUE TO ITS INABILITY TO PAY RENT ON ITS CURRENT BUILDING, WHICH IT RENTS FROM THE PRESOV LOCAL GOVERNMENT FOR SKK 2.7 MILLION (\$85,443) PER YEAR. THE MUSEUM CURATORS ARE THINKING OF MOVING TO AN OLD POST OFFICE BUILDING. THE DAILY SME REPORTED THAT JOHN WARHOLA, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE ANDY WARHOL FOUNDATION IN NEW YORK, OPPOSES THE ACTION AND THAT WARHOL'S ARTWORKS MIGHT BE TAKEN AWAY FROM THE MUSEUM IF IT MOVES.

THAYER

